

Causes of Psychosis Need to be Found and Treated

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Los Angeles -- Few can find true sympathy for Andrea Yates. A Texas jury, perhaps understandably, could not forgive her.

The only thing more maddening than her act is the question of why she did it. And could it have been prevented?

The medical community clearly states it does not know what causes postpartum depression or psychosis. The treatment of choice is psychotropic drugs. Because such medication only masks symptoms, this means that the actual physical cause of this disturbed mental state nearly always remains untreated.

Whatever malfunction inside the body of Yates caused her insanity, a physical change she experienced long before the murders, it remained wrong with her right up to the final breath of the last drowned child and likely continued to wreak havoc with her as her guilty verdict was read.

Added to the unknown cause was the use of psychotropic drugs, which can have a side effect of violent impulses.

While a judicious use of psychotropics may certainly be necessary in some cases, to pretend that the patient has then been treated is simply false.

The undiscovered cause remains and continues to impact the drugged woman.

Any honest doctor knows this.

Postpartum women have been through a horrific time, exhausted from the birth, hormones out of whack, nutrients drained from the body, sleep deprivation, sometimes low thyroid conditions flare. Likely physical culprits abound.

Yet the physical cause of the problem is rarely found and commonly not even looked for with any real zeal. Nutritional abnormalities are hardly considered. Additionally, a number of tests and treatments exist that, often, only alternative doctors (and almost no psychiatrists) use.

Yates received standard treatment for postpartum depression. The results should raise public concern.

Is she responsible for killing her babies? The jury said yes; some experts think not. But for sure, if she would have been medically tested and prodded until the physical cause of her symptoms was found and really treated, besides drugging her, those babies could very well still be with us.